



**MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
April 6, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

Due to the COVID-19 health pandemic, the Long Lake City Council attended the meeting telephonically pursuant to Minn. Stat. 13D.021.

Present: Mayor: Charlie Miner; Council: Jahn Dyvik, Gina Joyce, and Deirdre Kvale

Staff Present: City Administrator: Scott Weske; Public Works Director: Sean Diercks; and City Engineer: Alex Mollenkamp

Absent: Mike Feldmann (with prior notice)

APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Miner, seconded by Joyce, to approve the agenda as presented. Ayes: all.

OPEN CORRESPONDENCE

No one was in attendance to address the City Council during Open Correspondence, and no written comments were received to be read aloud by staff.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Discuss Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project and 2022 Street Improvement Project Update

City Engineer Mollenkamp gave a brief overview of a potential sewer rehabilitation project, providing an explanation of how problem areas were identified and the proposed improvements. She indicated that the improvements include cured in place liners, chemical grout joint seal, repair of offset joints and holes, and noted that there should be very little disruption to the users.

Mayor Miner commented that there is a lot of damage due to frost and heaving and asked why the City would only do liner replacement as he would question how that would improve anything structurally.

Mollenkamp explained that the nice thing about gravity sewer pipe is that, in general, they don't run into the problem with the freeze/thaw issue like a watermain can. She stated that the separated joints are resultant of the soil around them settling over time. The liner that would be put in has a structural strength to it and has a strength rating for vertical pressure that makes it just as good as putting in a brand-new pipe. She added that installing the liner is a cost saving measure because the road does not have to be dug up as it would be for installation of brand-new pipe. She indicated that the use of cured in place liners is a very common practice.

Council member Joyce asked if Orono interconnects impact this project at all.

Mollenkamp responded that Long Lake is carrying the sewage from the Orono interconnections and they play into the capacity question. She stated that if the City is receiving flow from the

neighboring communities, the City needs to make sure that its pipes have capacity to handle the flow as well as any future flows. She noted that the interconnects would be related, but not necessarily a factor in this project. She reviewed the proposed funding for the project including reimbursement from a Metropolitan Council I & I grant which is accepting applications for project construction costs incurred between 2021 and 2022, with reimbursement to be coming in 2023. She pointed out that this is a relatively low risk grant application because there is no penalty if the City chooses not to do the project. She stated that the application is due on April 16, 2021, so she would like some guidance from the Council regarding whether they would like to pursue this grant opportunity. She stated that the sewer rehabilitation project cost is estimated at \$380,000, which after the Metropolitan Council grant and utilizing American Rescue Plan funds would leave about \$150,000 that would need to be covered with City funds.

Council member Dyvik inquired whether there was an estimate on what the annual savings would be in Metropolitan Council costs if the City moved forward with this project.

Mollenkamp replied that they do not know how much I & I the project would eliminate; however, this project would repair about 6,700 linear feet of the total 63,000 linear feet of pipe, so this would address about 10% of the pipes in the whole City.

Public Works Director Diercks commented that in the map presented by Mollenkamp the repairs identified are the absolute worst of the worst in the area, and he shared some details of the condition of some of the lines. He stated that he would estimate that 50-60% of the City's I & I for that district is coming through an area which this project would address.

Council member Dyvik asked how much the City pays each year in I & I penalties.

City Administrator Weske responded that the total bill is around \$230,000 paid to Metropolitan Council. The City sells 56 million gallons a year approximately, but contributes 120 million gallons into the Metropolitan Council wastewater treatment system. He added that the proposed project would be great deal and he believes there will be instant impact to the bottom line.

Council member Dyvik questioned how the City knows how much I & I is coming in from Orono.

Diercks advised that staff is looking at readdressing utility agreements with Orono and is looking at metering their use also.

Weske noted that they will be bringing new draft utility agreements to the next Work Session meeting for Council input.

Council member Joyce asked if there was anything else the City could or should use the American Rescue Funds for besides this sewer project.

Weske replied that he has only received a broad overview of the guidelines at this point. He stated that he does know the funds will be available to be allocated for more uses than the previous COVID-19 relief funding and explained that he sees this project as an ideal thing for the City to spend money on.

Council member Joyce recalled that Diercks had mentioned that this area for repairs is the worst of the worst, and asked if it had already been on staff's radar for a while.

Diercks confirmed that addressing repairs in the affected area has been about a 40-year work in progress.

Weske reminded the Council that they had authorized up to \$25,000 last year in order to televise and determine the issues, and completing a project would be the next step to address the problems that were found. He reiterated that staff expects the impact of this project to be seen right away.

It was the consensus of the City Council to provide direction to staff to apply for the Metropolitan Council grant opportunity to fund the proposed sanitary sewer project.

Mollenkamp indicated that she would be communicating with staff to work on a potential timeline for this project and can also bring back a proposal to the Council for the work. She stated that she is unsure when the City will hear about the grant application outcome but when she finds out, she will update Administrator Weske.

Mollenkamp gave an overview of the 2022 Street Improvement Project details and scope. She stated that the project area would be reconstruction of the west end of Grand Avenue from Glendale Drive to Harrington Drive along with a small portion of Glendale Drive, with the estimated total cost to be \$977,000. She offered a break down of estimated project costs: the surface improvements would be \$576,000; watermain improvements would be \$178,000; sanitary sewer improvements would be \$52,000; and storm sewer improvements would be \$171,000. She pointed out that the total estimated cost is lower than what is listed in the Pavement Management Plan (PMP) for this project because it assumes that the sanitary sewer on Grand Avenue will be lined ahead of the project like the Council had just discussed. She noted that if the lining does not happen, the project estimate would revert back to what is in the PMP. She reviewed a possible schedule if the Council would like the project to occur in 2022. She advised that the Council will need to identify funding and determine if it is a 2022 or 2023 project.

Mayor Miner recalled that he thought that the project cost was something like \$1.2 million for the entire stretch of Grand Avenue and asked how the proposed project is just such a small stretch of Grand Avenue.

Mollenkamp replied that she would have to look back to where that cost came from and if it included all utilities being replaced or not.

Weske indicated his recollection was that the City chose to focus on this area because eight of the ten watermain breaks in the vicinity occurred along that stretch of roadway. He stated that if the project went all the way down to Brown Road N, he believed the project estimate was closer to \$3.5 million and the City was not in the financial position for that large of a project.

Council member Kvale questioned how many homes would be assessed.

Mollenkamp stated that there would be five homes assessed as well as Calvin Presbyterian Church.

The Council discussed the possibility of including other streets in the area at the same time, how the proposed project area was selected, and the potential perception of residents regarding this project.

Council member Kvale inquired whether there were any other possible grants that the City could apply for to help extend this project further.

Mollenkamp replied that they do keep their eyes open for other possible grants and explained some possible ways to increase the reimbursement through the Metropolitan Council grant.

It was the consensus of the City Council that they support advancing the proposed Street Improvement Project in some form.

Mayor Miner noted that this project would be just a start and there are other roads that are in poor condition as well.

Council member Joyce sought additional background as to why the City was starting with Grand Avenue versus some of the streets in the City that are shown as red on the current conditions map.

Weske explained that they were focusing on the Grand Avenue corridor because of the numerous watermain breaks in the area.

Mollenkamp stated that she will work with staff to narrow down the scope of the project and bring that back to the Council.

Update on Fire Department Discussions

Fire Chief Van Eyll reported that there will be another meeting to discuss the future of the Fire Department on April 7, 2021 at 7:00 am with representatives from the State Fire Marshal's office. He stated that the participating cities have been tasked with trying to find the "why" as to why their City wants to be at the table and participate. He indicated that the agenda for tomorrow's meeting is to finalize some of the ground rules and expectations, discuss their "why" information, and discuss next steps.

Weske commented that there have been some conversations between the Mayors and staff over in Orono. He noted that they have been given ideas of what Orono is intending to do, they have not formally taken any action as of yet, but the assumption has been that they do not want to be part of this exploration of future fire service because they want their own Fire Department.

Mayor Miner shared that he had written a column for the City newsletter that will be coming out shortly with water bills. He stated that he included information indicating Orono has notified the City that they plan to pass a resolution that terminates the contract for joint ownership of Fire Station 1 effective December 31, 2025. He added that he also taped a State of the City address for broadcasting by the LMCC that will be released shortly which shares the same information and explained that Orono is planning to create their own Fire Department.

Council member Dyvik suggested that this information be shared in some form on Facebook.

Mayor Miner noted that City Clerk Moeller has been keeping her eye on some pending legislation that is moving through regarding the ability to create a taxable fire district.

Fire Chief Van Eyll added that this is the farthest this legislation has ever gotten, but he does not know if it will move forward to be enacted this year or not.

The Council discussed the legislation and some of the things to consider in the City's "why" statement and what the future fire needs may be.

OTHER BUSINESS

Fire Damaged Property - Council member Dyvik inquired whether there was anything happening with the fire damaged house on Underhill Circle. Weske responded that he thought permitted needed to be applied for 180 days and they may be out of compliance. Fire Chief Van Eyll indicated that it is past 180 days but clarified here are two different timelines based on the amount of destruction to the home, and this qualifies for the longer timeline which is 12 months. They have one year to file a permit to rebuild what they have in that location and still be approved. He believed City Clerk Moeller had reached out to them after six months but he was unsure if she had heard anything back from the homeowners. Council member Kvale asked what would happen if

they do not get to rebuild and whether that would mean they had to take the structure down. Van Eyll responded that the City may have to force the issue by condemning the structure.

ADJOURN

Hearing no objection, Mayor Miner adjourned by general consent at 6:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Weske
City Administrator